

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest – 2000

Second Prize: Shannon Mercado, Mattson Jr. High

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a great man. He was an all time leader in the struggle for civil rights. His dreams were alive and churning in the souls of anti-slavery men and women. Even though people mocked him, taunted him, hurt him, he would turn the other cheek. If there were more like him, there would possibly be world peace. When he looked at you he saw you were equal to everyone else. You were the equal of a Hispanic, African-American and a Caucasian person. He was a great man.

African-Americans in the 1950's through the 1960's had a civil rights movement. This is when they fought for their rights as human beings and not as slaves. There was still discrimination and racism. That's where Martin Luther King stepped in. He had a dream that he could make a difference, that he could make peace between our cultures. And that is just what he did. From 1954 to 1968, African-Americans fought for and won their civil rights. Now you ask me how us teenagers can go and keep Dr. Martin Luther King JR's dream alive. Well how did Dr. King keep his dreams alive? It took leadership, perseverance, time, effort, help, sportsmanship, guidance, and I could go on and on forever. What I am trying to say is that you need talent, a good attitude and an open mind. Not everyone can be a leader, but everyone can be a follower. Just make sure you are guided in the right direction. We are still children and we still need help comprehending life's troubles. Until we know that, we will not be able to fix them.

I will help keep Martin Luther King's dream alive by saying no to peer pressure and keeping an open mind to all shapes, sizes, and colors of people. We are all different, but we are also all alike. We were all born and we will all die. I will be a safe person and say no to drugs and all other things can lead us astray. To repeat slavery and racism against anyone is a shame. The sad thing though is that there is still racism and slavery, not in America, but in other countries. In China little kids make toys and are paid close to nothing for their labor each day. This is where Martin Luther King Jr. is needed to step in to stop such labor in those countries. But since he is not here to do such work like he did in the past, we as people need to keep his dreams going. Those words are legends. How can we pass on those words to our children if we only leave them in the history books? We need to train ourselves to be like him, like a hero. He is definitely a person to look up to.

If he were not there, there would most likely be no civil rights for the African-Americans. I hope that if he were not there, there would be someone in his place doing what he did. We need to be leaders and to be people who earn their right to be an American and stick up for the needy. To help one another to be good Samaritans and learn from your mistakes. If we do not help one another then life would be a shame. We need to abide by the rules and to think things through and not to be impulsive. There are many ways to keep Dr Martin Luther King Jr. dreams alive. Most of those ways we need to find on our own. We need to be strong and hold together to keep each other in line. We need respect for one another. Doesn't the bible tell us to treat others, as you would want to be treated? That is what we need do. Keep yourself busy in sports, school, and community activities. Our generation needs to be the one that changes it all. What a better time than the new millennium to do some work? All Martin Luther king Jr. wanted us to do is be happy, to be brothers and sisters and to make the world a better place.

This is for our children's and their children's sake and all the generations to come. Be a good example and a good person.

Bibliography:

Rowland, Della. Martin Luther King, Jr. the Dream of Peaceful Revolution, Silver Burdett Press 1990